

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 26, 2003

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 5, 2003

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 3, 2003

SENATE BILL

No. 978

Introduced by Senator Torlakson

(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Canciamilla)

(Coauthor: Assembly Member Houston)

February 21, 2003

An act to add Section 5002.25 to the Public Resources Code, relating to parks and recreation.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 978, as amended, Torlakson. State parks: John Marsh Home.

Existing law provides that all parks, public campgrounds, monument sites, landmark sites, and sites of historical interest established or acquired by the state, or that are under its control, constitute the State Park System, except the sites and grounds known as the State Fair Grounds in the City of Sacramento, and Balboa Park in the City of San Diego, and prescribes procedures for the classification or reclassification of units of the state park system.

This bill would require the department, consistent with the requirements regarding the classification of a unit of the state park system, to take action, at the earliest possible time, to ensure that the John Marsh Home, located in Contra Costa County, and the property surrounding the home is classified as a unit of the state park system.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares the following:

(a) Dr. John Marsh was the first American physician to settle in California and one of the first prominent settlers to extol the virtues of the state.

(b) Dr. Marsh also ran a large cattle ranch that served as an important stopover for settlers traveling between Sutter's Fort in Sacramento and San Francisco Bay area destinations.

(c) Dr. Marsh built one of the largest homes in the area that was constructed with materials native to California.

(d) Dr. Marsh's home is of great historical significance and deserves to be preserved as a state park historic site.

(e) *The state has owned the John Marsh Home and 14 acres surrounding it since 1978, but the home and property have remained closed to the public.*

(f) *The John Marsh Home, built in the early 1850s is in disrepair, particularly on its "north wall."*

(g) *Urgent repair work is needed in order to avoid collapse of this historic home, prevent its further decay, and avoid additional expense for the home's preservation.*

(h) *The proposed state park would provide opportunities to create a "Pioneers State Park," thereby preserving the John Marsh Home and the lands surrounding it, where Native Americans, Spanish and Mexican settlers, and other people from the United States and the rest of the world, came to make their homes.*

(i) California voters have recently passed bond measures for park funding that emphasize the development of parks accessible to urban populations.

~~(f)~~

(j) The proposed ~~John Marsh State Park~~ *state park*, which is located in Contra Costa County and near a rapidly growing urban population, provides open space, protection of habitat corridors and endangered species, preservation of the historical John Marsh Home and adjacent historic site, recreational opportunities, and trails connected to regional parks.

~~(g)~~

1 (k) Much of the 4,000 acre Cowell Ranch, adjacent to the John
2 Marsh Home, has recently been added to the existing 14 acre state
3 park property.

4 ~~(h)~~

5 (l) The development of the ~~John Marsh State Park~~ *state park*
6 is a unique collaboration among many public and private partners,
7 including federal, state, regional, and local agencies, community
8 members and groups, and private developers who have
9 contributed funds and are sharing resources for infrastructure
10 development and joint operations.

11 SEC. 2. Section 5002.25 is added to the Public Resources
12 Code, to read:

13 5002.25. Consistent with the requirements of this article
14 regarding the classification of a unit of the state park system, the
15 department shall take action, at the earliest possible time, to ensure
16 that the John Marsh Home, located in Contra Costa County, and
17 the property surrounding the home is classified as a unit of the state
18 park system.

